



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

## NOTICE OF POTENTIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT FIRST INITIATIVE

**DATE:** September 6, 2013

**NOTICE OF POTENTIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:**

**1. This Schedule of Events updates and confirms scheduled dates.**

EVENT	TIME	DATE	UPDATED / CONFIRMED
1 Department issues notice of funding availability		August 16, 2013	CONFIRMED
2 Written "Questions and Comments" Deadline		August 22, 2013	CONFIRMED
3 State Responds to Written "Questions and Comments"		September 6, 2013	UPDATED
4 Deadline for Grant Applications to be submitted to DIDD	4:00 p.m.	September 16, 2013	UPDATED
5 DIDD completes evaluations of Grant Applications		September 25 2013	UPDATED
6 Evaluation Notices are released		September 30, 2013	UPDATED
7 Effective date of Grant Contract.		November 1, 2013	UPDATED

**2. State responses to questions and comments in the table below amend and clarify this RFP.**

Any restatement of RFP text in the Question/Comment column shall NOT be construed as a change in the actual wording of the RFP document.

QUESTION / COMMENT	STATE RESPONSE
1 Just wanting to clarify; am I reading correctly that to qualify for this grant, we would have to already be an approved Employment Network and have national accreditation for supported employment?	An agency does not have to be an approved Employment Network or be accredited for Supported Employment in order to be selected. However, the agency has to demonstrate that the proper steps have been taken to become an Employment Network and to become accredited.
2 It would appear the grant limits the potentials to already accredited corporations as the timeframe for a non-accredited corporation to become accredited could not occur in such a short time frame (Oct. 1, 2013). Is this an accurate statement?	The statement is inaccurate. It simply provides a timeframe of when the agency can begin the process of accreditation.

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3 There is no guarantee a corporation in the process of accreditation will become so. How will such a failure impact the application?	If an agency does not become accredited, they will not be awarded the portion for the milestone.
4 What are the current requirements to become an EN?	<p>The application to become an EN, which is called a Request for Quotation, complete with all instructions and requisite forms, is available the following web site address:</p> <p><a href="http://www.ssa.gov/work/enrfq.html">http://www.ssa.gov/work/enrfq.html</a></p>
5 Where will the five days of training (CWIC) be provided (location)?	<p>Training sessions are held in different locations. Scheduled trainings for the remainder of the year are available at the following web address:</p> <p><a href="http://www.vcu-ntc.org/training/initial.cfm">http://www.vcu-ntc.org/training/initial.cfm</a></p>
6 What is the amount of time required for the "assignments and assessments via Blackboard for one (1) month."?	<p><b>Part One</b></p> <p>Part One of the CWIC Certification process takes place in the 7-week period immediately following completion of the CWIC Initial Training class and involves completing a series of online competency based assessments. Successful completion of all assessments during this 7-week period results in <u>Provisional CWIC or Community Partner Certification.</u></p> <p>The assessment process takes, on average, 25-45 hours of time over the 7-week period. Participants should plan to budget their time accordingly.</p> <p><b>Part Two</b></p> <p>Part Two of the CWIC or Community Partner Certification process requires submission and successful review of three Benefits Summary &amp; Analysis reports during the one year period following successful completion of the online competency based assessments. Participants will only be granted full CWIC or Community Partner certification following successful completion of this case review requirement.</p> <p>For each of the Benefits Summary &amp; Analysis reports that will be submitted over the 12-month period, participants are required to select a beneficiary whom they are serving in the performance of their WIPA duties. This means the CWIC or Community Partner staff member will select three separate SSA beneficiaries and submit a Benefits Summary &amp; Analysis report for each of them.</p> <p>Full CWIC or Community Partner Certification will be granted to participants as soon as they have submitted and achieved a passing score on all three of the required Benefits Summary &amp; Analysis</p>

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	<p>reports.</p> <p>Additional information is available at the following web address:</p> <p><a href="http://www.vcu-ntc.org/certification/index.cfm">http://www.vcu-ntc.org/certification/index.cfm</a></p>
7 Why is there such a large number (3) (CWIC) required for the minimum?	The minimum requirement was created with the following components in mind: <b>a)</b> staff turnover; <b>b)</b> high demand for Benefits to Work Counselors; and <b>c)</b> convenience for agencies in the case that the current Counselor is at workload capacity.
8 How long does it take to become an EN currently and obtain approval to access the MAMIMUS database?	The approximate amount of time it takes to become an EN is about six to eight weeks. However, once you submit the Request for Quotation, you will receive an email confirming your submission.
9 The stated grant amount of \$1,500 implies an accredited corporation will receive that amount by just providing information that they are accredited. Is this the case?	That is correct. If the agency is already accredited, they will need to provide documentation that justifies their current accreditation.
10 Even if one begins the accreditation process now; it is problematic (especially with CARF) that they would be able to reach status by March, 2014. May accreditation be waived? If so, could that waiver be extended to three and four star agencies in Tennessee?	<p>Accreditation payment- Payment will be awarded if an agency justifies that they have initiated the process. Supporting documentation is required such as email, letters and/or any additional materials that prove the agency has initiated the process.</p> <p>Waiver accreditation <b>cannot</b> be waived.</p> <p>The waiver cannot be extended to 3-4 star agencies.</p>
11 Is funding only for those agencies that want to transition into supported employment and not for established SE programs?	Funding is provided for agencies that meet the applicable milestones.
12 What sets Employment Network programs as well as accredited programs apart from those supported employment programs that are not an Employment Network or accredited? Are EN and/or accredited SE programs the only ones allowed to implement Ticket to Work? I'm a little confused on this.	An agency that is an Employment Network has the opportunity to accept tickets from individuals that are receiving SSI/SSDI services and wish to obtain or retain employment. If an agency is not an EN, they do not have the opportunity to generate the significant amount of revenue through the Ticket to Work. Additionally, those that choose not to become an EN will not have access to the MAXIMUS database that indicates individuals in Tennessee who have a Ticket. The <b>only</b> agencies that have the opportunity to collect funding from Ticket to Work are those that have become EN's.
13 Do providers have access to Ticket to Work training for its employees?	<p>Yes. The training materials are available at the following web address:</p> <p><a href="https://yourtickettowork.com/web/ttw/training">https://yourtickettowork.com/web/ttw/training</a></p>

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<p>14 In reading the requirements of the employment grant, I made note of the accreditation requirement. It lists that the Grantee shall provide documentation that they have become accredited since commencement of the grant Contract from a qualified accreditor such as CARF or APSE.</p> <p>Please clarify what accreditation APSE offers. I'm only familiar with a certification offered to individuals. I've asked for information from APSE as well.</p> <p>Just as I "clicked" send, I received this response from APSE. Since they do not offer accreditation, what are the other DIDD-approved accrediting agencies besides CARF? I'm afraid a 6-month period is not sufficient to obtain CARF accreditation.</p>	<p>APSE does offer the Certified Employment Support Professional certification. Additional information can be found at the following web address:</p> <p><a href="http://www.apse.org/certification/">http://www.apse.org/certification/</a></p> <p>If your agency decides to pursue with another agency, communicate with DIDD to ensure that they agency is accepted as a qualifying accreditor.</p>
<p>15 Would we have to be accredited by the end of the contract?</p>	<p>No. Payment will be awarded if an agency justifies that they have initiated the process. Supporting documentation is required such as email, letters and/or any additional materials that prove the agency has initiated the process.</p>
<p>16 What would happen if we applied for and received grant monies, but for any reason were not able to become accredited in the time-period provided?</p>	<p>An agency does not have to become accredited during the time period. They simply need to provide the justification to prove that they are in the process of doing so.</p>
<p>17 Is it an option to just become an EN and to select individuals to attend training and get a portion of the full \$10,000 grant award, or must we become accredited to receive any portion of the grant?</p>	<p>All three portions must be met to receive the award.</p>
<p>18 Would our entire program have to become accredited, or would our vocational program only have to become accredited?</p>	<p>Each agency has the flexibility of deciding; however they <b>must</b> become accredited in the employment area.</p>
<p>19 Who or what agency actually provides the Benefits Counseling-Certified Work Incentives Counseling training that is outlined in the grant notice?</p>	<p>Virginia Commonwealth University National Training Center. Additional information is available at the following web address:</p> <p><a href="http://www.vcu-ntc.org/certification/index.cfm">http://www.vcu-ntc.org/certification/index.cfm</a></p>
<p>20 Would it be possible to get an outline of what the training would cover?</p>	<p>Training information is available at the following web address:</p> <p><a href="http://www.vcu-ntc.org/certification/index.cfm">http://www.vcu-ntc.org/certification/index.cfm</a></p>
<p>21 What would happen if we send three people to the training and one of those three is not able to complete it with a score of 80 percent or higher as required? Would that negate that entire portion of the grant?</p>	<p>As long as the agency has demonstrated that an employee has successfully passed the assignments and examinations with an 80% or higher they will receive the award.</p>

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<p>22 Are you familiar with any other accrediting agencies?</p>	<p>Information for other accrediting agencies is available at the following websites:</p> <p>APSE:  <a href="http://www.apse.org/certification/">http://www.apse.org/certification/</a></p> <p>ACRE:  <a href="http://www.acreducators.org/certificates/basic-employment-certificate">http://www.acreducators.org/certificates/basic-employment-certificate</a></p> <p>CQL:  <a href="http://www.thecouncil.org/CQLAccreditation/">http://www.thecouncil.org/CQLAccreditation/</a></p>
<p>23 To become CARF accredited, an agency must demonstrate competency for 6 months before requesting an accreditation visit. I need to ensure that we do NOT have to obtain accreditation by the end of the 6-month period. We've researched this before, and it was a lengthy process...possibly 2 years. If we do have to obtain accreditation by the end of the 6-month period, I'm afraid any agency that is not already accredited will be out of the running for this grant. I'm not familiar with any other accrediting agencies.</p> <p>On page 9, Question 3, second part, I need clarification. "Explain how the agency plans to implement and operate in the area in which you plan to provide services through incentive payments (EN, CWIC, employment certification)." I'm unclear what the CWIC and employment certification means. We would receive payment by becoming an EN and placing people in jobs, but I'm not aware of any payments received by the CWIC and I'm not sure what employment certification means. Can you please clarify what this question intends to gather?</p>	<p>Refer to answer 22 above for additional accrediting agencies.</p> <p>The incentive payment only applies to becoming an EN. There are not any payments received by the CWIC.</p> <p>The purpose of the question is to learn the manner in which the agency will support their clients to obtain integrated employment in the community, and how they will use the funding provided to become an EN, by assigning staff to attend CWIC training and by obtaining an employment accreditation or certification.</p>
<p>24 If an agency becomes an EN and/or accredited, is that agency required to participate in Ticket to Work?</p>	<p>Yes. The sole intention of becoming an Employment Network is to assign Tickets to your agency in order to generate revenue for providing employment services.</p>